

We Resolved to Make a Difference in 2019

*The Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas
Missioner for Creation Care*

I want to thank the congregations across our diocese that are moving forward to implement the resolution that our Diocesan Convention passed unanimously last October, "Creation Care in our Congregations: Living Lightly on God's Good Earth."

Our diocese is increasingly recognized as a Creation Care leader in the Episcopal Church. Thank you for all the ways that you are stepping up to safeguard the web of life, which needs our urgent protection as never before.

Has your congregation created a Green Team? What has it done so far? Have you carried out an energy audit? As you enact the resolution, do you have any stories, surprises, or suggestions you'd like to pass along to the diocese? Please send news about your progress to our magazine editor, the Rev. Vicki Ix — we would love to share some of it in the next issue of *Abundant Times*.

If your congregation has not yet enacted the resolution, now is the perfect time to get started. The resolution reminds us that we are all called to be faithful stewards of our fragile planet by taking three steps before our 118th Diocesan Convention:

- 1.) Create a Green Team, beginning by naming one or more individuals to serve as liaison

with our diocese's Missioner for Creation Care in order to help the parish strengthen energy conservation and efficiency and encourage public advocacy around environmental issues.

- 2.) Undertake an energy audit for all parish buildings in order to reduce the parish's carbon footprint, keeping in mind that grants are available from the Diocese to offset half the cost of the audit. Wondering how to get an energy audit? Contact Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light.
- 3.) Report back to the sponsors of this resolution before the 118th Diocesan Convention on steps taken and progress made on Steps #1 and #2. Congregations should report progress and accomplishments to the following members of the General Convention Deputation:
 - In the Berkshire Corridor: John Cheek (cheekbass@gmail.com)
 - In the Valley Corridor: Maggie Sweeney (magsween10@yahoo.com)
 - In the Worcester Corridor: Mac Murray (mac.murray@gmail.com)

Thank you, John, Maggie, and Fr. Mac, for receiving this information and for your leadership.

I look forward to connecting with a Creation Care liaison (or green team) in every congregation, and to hearing about your accomplishments as you implement energy audits.

Thank you for everything you are doing — as individuals and as communities of faith — to heal God's Creation, to cut back on fossil fuels, and to increase energy efficiency and conservation.

Every prayerful action counts. Every degree counts. ♦



Photo: Tipper Gore ▲

The Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Missioner for Creation Care, can be reached at mbj@revivingcreation.org. Visit her website, RevivingCreation.org, for sermons and articles, and to sign up for blog posts and monthly newsletters.

Green Teams at Work



St. David's Episcopal Church, Agawam

"As you can see from the report, there was very little in the way of recommendations for energy savings, primarily because our building is only 21 years old, and thus is more up-to-date in terms of insulation, windows, etc. Our tankless hot water heater and fully LED lit building are from previous projects that continue to save energy and operating budget dollars. Our major concern at this point is the need to replace our air conditioning/heating systems, on which we have spent a large amount of money on repairs over the past 2 years. They have an expected life span of 20 years, so we are there."

- Jim Shields, Green Team



St. John's Episcopal Church, Ashfield

"Though much was accomplished for the care of St. John's buildings and grounds in the past year, nothing stands out as much as the purchase and installation of a new, efficient propane heating system in the Corner House. [...] The gentleman from Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light (IP&L), Thomas Nutt-Powell, conducted a detailed audit of the church and the Corner House and estimates that the conversion is the equivalent of taking off the road a car driven 12,000 miles a year that gets 20 miles per gallon."

- Bill Scaife, junior warden



Saints James and Andrew, Greenfield

"Saints James and Andrew received an energy assessment from Mass Save, and that brought with it a subsidy for the recommended insulation of our sanctuary amounting to roughly 90% of the total cost. In addition to insulating the sanctuary, the church is working on upgrading our lighting to mostly LED and installing dimmers and timer or sensor switches where appropriate. The energy assessments noted that our heating system is efficient and has modern controls, such as timed thermostats. Our next major energy-saving upgrade will be attention to the windows in our buildings, which likely will be an extended process."

- Tupper Brown, Green Team



Christ Trinity Church, Sheffield

"We were surprised to learn that even in our new addition (2000) there was work that could be done to save energy. It was nice to hear that the incentives for doing this work cover between 70% and 90% of the entire project cost. Looking into our energy usage has also led us to wonder about going solar as a next step."

- The Rev. Erik Karas, pastor, rector